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ABSTRACT

A longitudinal study is being conducted to assess the occupational activities and aspirations of young people trained in West Germany's "dual system" of apprenticeship and part-time jobs. Baseline data were gathered from 21,000 students, and approximately 10,000 of them were contacted one and one-half years later. The sample population of the survey was young people in 37 selected occupations in the metal trades, electrical trades, and commerce fields, who completed their in-plant training successfully in 1984. Some of the results of the first-wave inquiry were as follows: (1) 62 percent of those who had completed training said that their training firm had offered them an employment contract, although this varied by training area, number of employees, and type of occupation; (2) six months after completing training, 69 percent were employed, 13 percent were in school or further training, 9 percent were in military service, and 9 percent were unemployed; (3) only about half of the training graduates said that their current job is appropriate to their learned occupation; (4) of those still employed six months after training, 25 percent were no longer with their training establishment, and of those, 47 percent assessed their skills as not being appropriate to their learned occupations; and (5) both employers and trainees preferred part-time employment and part-time school arrangements if employers could not give full employment to all program graduates. (KC)

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The transition of young people into employment after completion of apprenticeship in the 'dual system' (in-plant training and part-time school)

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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Findings from a research project of the Federal Institute for Vocational Training

Paper presented at a meeting with international experts in vocational education and training, Bonn, 7 March 1986.

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An unchallenged wisdom in each major country which has enjoyed economic success - notably Japan, Germany and the United States - is that the skills and adaptability of their labor force are a main precondition for raising prosperity. However, youth unemployment has been a familiar phenomenon in most western industrialised countries in the past decades. The 1985 OECD report "Education and Training after Basic Schooling" points out that "many young people today are experiencing greater difficulties in managing their transition to adulthood (and work) than past generations" (p.7)

From the late 1970's until now, the Federal Republic of Germany has faced severe problems on the job training markets, especially a lack of training places on the apprenticeship market. The numerous legal measures to relieve the pressure on the dual system at threshold I, that is the transition from school to occupational training has led to a temporary shift of demand. Half of our applicants for training places are older than 18; "old applicants" stem from earlier school-leaver classes - attending a full-time vocational school after their general school education.

Due to demographic reasons the baby boom generation is now leaving the training system and faced with a slack labor market. It is assumed that problems will become even more acute after the completion of job-training at threshold II, that is the transition from occupational training to gainful employment.

A recent phenomenon, attracting considerable press attention and public debate, has been the inability of a growing number of firms to provide offers of appropriate employment to all of their newly qualified apprentices. At the same time, the magnitude of the problem of unemployment among those completing their training has been increasing rapidly.

To get a better understanding of the transition from occupational training to employment, the Federal Institute for Vocational Training started a follow-up study of graduates who completed their apprenticeship in 1984.

First, I would like to present an overview of our research project ontitled "The Transition of Young People into Employment after Completion of In-Plant Training" (or more briefly: "Educational and Occupational Career"). Then I shall give some selected results of our first-wave survey indicating the problems of young people in the transition period and possible arrangements and mechanisms which could ease this problematic situation.

The last section discusses the consequences for the concept of vocational training.

I. THE RESEARCH PROJECT - AN OVERVIEW

The primary **purpose of the study** is the observation of the educational and occupational activities, plans, aspirations and attitudes of young people trained in the "dual system" after the completion of their apprenticeship and the investigation of the relationship between these facts and the respondents' prior educational and training experiences, personal and biographical characteristics.

The **design of the study** is a longitudinal one. The benefits of longitudinal surveys stem primarily from the fact that they collect information from the same respondent at several points in time. Thus they enable us to analyse a sequence of events and to compare subjective attitudes and expectations with subsequent actual behavior of respondents at later points in time.

Chart 1 reveals how the data base is built up gradually to serve as a "national resource" which is continually mined to answer a variety of **research and policy questions**:

Such questions are for example:

- To what extent is later career development already essentially determined and shaped by one's training occupation and first job placement?

- What is the relationship between current labor market experience of young skilled workers and subsequent adult performance?

  Which training occupations prove best for the integration into working life?

- Does every type of job (unskilled, semiskilled, not related to former training) taken on after graduation provide the necessary opportunity for advancement, permanency or for the acquisition of transferable skills?

- What does unemployoment experienced immediately after training mean in terms of loss of skills and occupational competences, motivations, orientations to work?

  Is there any carryover effect on their comparative unemployment and earning records to later stages of their occupational career?

- What is the relationship between training - job requirements and further training?

- In which areas is further training necessary? Which are the objectives of training to meet the challenges of job life caused by technological innovations?

- Which individual adaptive strategies (job change, change of employer, regional mobility) lead to occupational success?

- Which are the links between attitudes or expectations for the future and factual behavior at later points in time?

- Is there any interaction between events in personal life (job of partner, marriage, children, leaving home) and occupational career decisions?

The time axis of chart 1 shows the stages of the **investigation process**:

- In late 1983 we made a contact survey in 247 part-time vocational schools to get panel participants. A standardized questionnaire was administered in class-room to more than 25.000 respondents. About 21 000 agreed to participate in the following surveys.

- The First Wave Inquiry was conducted in winter 1984/spring 1985 by a mail questionnaire with 39 questions. My analysis is based on answers of roughly 10 000 respondents.

- The Second Wave Inquiry will start in December 1986 to March 1987. It is supposed that at that time most of the male respondents will have finished their mandatory military or civilian service.

- The Third Wave Inquiry will be in 1989 - five years after completion of apprenticeship - a period which is considered sufficient to make reliable judgements about the integration and consolidation of the 1984 graduate cohort in working life.

Chart 1 further indicates the breadth of **topics** covered **in the survey questionnaires** . A rich body of information is being collected on current labor market status, job characteristics like wages, hours worked, the whole training course and retraining, occupational and job history, socioeconomic background, work- related attitudes and personality characteristics, the utilization of knowledge and skills at the workplace.

It is of particular importance that the employment data are collected in an event history format (that means yielding a continuous picture of employment behavior).

Chart 1 <section II> shows also which processes and outcomes

can be analysed by use of these data. To finish this overview let me make same remarks concerning our **survey sampling procedure**. The target population of our <stratified random> sample survey were young people in 37 selected recognized training occupations belonging to three out of 13 occupational fields, who completed their in-plant training successfully in 1984.

Chart 2 lists these occupations.

Chart 3 shows that more than half of the overall 1984 training graduate cohort <size of the cohort is 605 000> received their training in the occupational fields "metalwork", "electrical trades", and "industry and administration" (commerce).

Our reasons for the selection of these training occupations were threefold:

- First, at present many of these occupations are subject to new training regulations
- Secondly, because of the technological innovations and economic and social developments these occupations are faced with and,
- thirdly, 13 of our selected occupations are among the top 20 of the most chosen training occupations in the Federal Republic of Germany.

II. RESULTS OF THE FIRST-WAVE INQUIRY

Now let me summarize some of our **results from the first-wave inquiry**. I would like to stress the fact that all our findings stem from subjective measurement, that means from individual answers of our respondents.

The following results deserve special attention:

* 62 % of the young people in our survey who had completed training said that their training firm had offered them an employment contract, but there are significant differences according to

- training area	industry and commerce	74 %
	craft trades	51 %
	public service	77 %

	- number of employees in the training establishment	under 10	51 %
		1000 and more	73 %
and	- type of occupation	metal	56 %
		electrical	58 %
		office + sales	65 %

There is only little difference between sexes: men 61 %, women 63 %.

* On the other hand, a close third (29 %, m=30%, f=26%) of the trained skilled workers wanted of their own accord to leave the training establishment immediately after taking their final examination.

To find a first answer to the question of (successful) integration of these young skilled workers into the employment system (at Threshold II) let's have a look at the upper part of the chart on page 4.

The following results are of particular importance: six months after completing the occupational training,

- 69 % of our respondents were in gainful employment
- 13 % were in school, tertiary education or in further training
- 9 % are in their mandatory military or civilian service (men only)
- and another 9 % are unemployed.

It is of special interest for occupational training policy that only about half (50 % + 4%) of the young training graduates or 78 % of all employed persons said in self-assessment that their current job is appropriate to their learned occupation.

The lower part of the chart on page 4 gives evidence that the status held six months after completing training differs substantially from trained occupation.

Looking only at respondents who were still employed six months after finishing their training , one out of four is no longer on the pay role of his or her training establishment. Of these, 47 % of the employed skilled workers assessed their jobs as not being appropriate to their learned occupation. Given the case that they were still employed by their training establishment, this figure drops to 14 %.

The situation in the job-training market of the 1980's has been apostrophized by the slogan "training in reserve". Official figures issued by the Federal Labor Office show the growing difficulties now encountered by job-seekers after completion of their job-training:

In 1984, about 80.000 (or 14 %) of all participants who successfully passed final examinations in the "dual system" remained unemployed after their vocational training. In 1980, this figure was only 9.500.

Our survey gives further evidence that a large number of firms are unable to provide offers of appropriate employment to all of their newly qualified apprentices. In an attempt to avoid recourse to dismissals, a number of larger enterprises have been forced to offer to their qualified trainees

(1) unskilled work or work unrelated to their training,
(2) temporary contracts of employment;
(3) A third solution has been that of making jobs available on a part-time basis.

We asked our respondents to evaluate four possible **institutional arrangements** which could help **to solve the employment problem** , and which are being discussed in public debate or already being put into practice. We named these models "new types", indicating that they are not the classical path of integration into employment for graduated apprentices.

Chart 5 gives a description of the types as rated by our respondents.

According to figure 6 model 4 "part-time work in occupation learned in combination with further training" is rated best, and seems to be most attractive, whereas model 3, "part-time work in occupation learned" finds only little consent.
Our respondents prefer a full-time job with a regular employment contract not corresponding to the occupation learned (model 2) to a job in the occupation learned if this means accepting a temporary work contract (model 1).

In another BIBB-survey which was conducted in spring 1985, we asked 7.800 employers their opinion regarding these same types of job offers:

"Which type of job offers would you prefer?"

In figure 7 the employers' ratings are compared to the ratings by qualified apprentices in 1984.

Let's have a look at the lower section of the figure. Consider

that the third rating category which adds up to 100 % is omitted. The three smaller bars above represent the ratings of selected industries. The letter W stands for wholesale and retail trade, F stands for financing, and I stands for insurance.

To summarize the results of this comparison:

(1) Model 4 shows the largest differences between employers' and apprentices' ratings.

(2) Model 1 "Temporary employment contract for one year in occupation learned" got the highest approval of all models by employers, and to a lesser degree that of the apprentices.
A take-on offer limited to one year obviously meets best the requirements of employers. Thus they can make use of a revolving mechanism of personnel recruitment. By offering a job for one year, they can satisfy their need for marginal personnel and at the same time test a number of their qualified apprentices as to whether they are worth taking on as core personnel with a longer job perspective.

(3) The creation of jobs at the entry level for newly qualified apprentices by means of pure "Part-time work" or "Job sharing" (model 3) holds little appeal to both sides.
In my opinion, it is remarkable that in the view of employers this also holds true in combination with further training (model 4).

The assessment of the arrangements corresponds clearly to factual behaviour. Temporary contracts of employment are held by 13 % of those in gainful employment, whereas pure part time work (2 %) can be quantitatively neglected.

As we could show, young people obviously have quite distinct expectations regarding attractive institutional patterns or ways of their integration into working life. However, faced with a slack labor market, they are ready to make considerable individual adaptions under the given conditions of the labor market.

We asked them what their **attitudes are towards some "classic" dimensions of occupational flexibility and mobility .**

Their answers in chart 8 show that

- occupational flexibility and mobility (items 5 and 6) range among the more attractive and probable personal solutions.

- The same is true for limited regional mobility (item 2) and

making higher investments into human capital (item 1).

- Our respondents clearly rejected - which might seem surprising from U.S.-experience - accepting complete regional mobility (item 3). Furthermore , they did not accept a limited period of unemployment (item 4).

In my opinion, this last result can be interpreted as a strong indicator of non-rigidity, that is they are not willing to risk the disadvantages of unemployment - even if limited to one year - to get a job appropriate to their training occupation.

Whether the subjective willingness to make adjustments leads to the corresponding labor market activities cannot be proved at present. But we should find the answer in our second-wave inquiry which is to be conducted in spring 1987.

III. CONSEQUENCES FOR OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING

In summary, we have learned from our survey-findings that the transition process into work has become riskier for young apprentices. Many of them found work for which they had not been trained. Others failed to get a good start in working life.

However, the real goal of apprenticeship in the setting of our dual system is to train workers for immediate, full-time employment appropriate to their trained occupation.

Of course, this direct path into an occupational career has not always been practised even in former decades, times of full employment.
Leaving the training establishment, changing a job or industry, transfering from the trades into manufacturing or civil service were sometimes a neccessity but often a voluntary action motivated by the chance to get a "good" job (in terms of earnings, security etc.) or to broaden one's work experience and competence.

Those may have been the opportunities in times after World War II in a prospering "industrial society". But what about times of underemployment as the FRG is faced with now, an economic situation in which a reduced GNP growth rate can be expected?

How are the qualification requirements of a "postindustrial" society developing into an information and service society to be met?

Is having an occupation now losing its central function in integrating trained young people into society?

The German understanding of occupation includes a characteristic

package of employment, work, qualifications and competence. Through an occupation young people form human capital, i.e. an offer of what they are capable of in terms of work in line with market conditions.

Nevertheless we have to consider in our training concept

- the effect of new technologies on skills
- the increasing degree of freedom in procedures shaping the organization of work common to modern management philosophy
- the relationships between training - job - retraining
- the existing institutional arrangements and capacities in the dual system and
- the changed assessment of work in society.

There is some evidence to show that the concept of an occupation or career as a complete entity guiding our concept of vocational training is in jeopardy.

What do I mean by this?
To catchphrase it briefly:

- Occupational training does not always bring with it full competence for a job if there is no possibility to gain practical experience under the conditions of adult working life which in turn promotes the qualified apprentice into the sought-after category of "experienced" worker.
- The fact is that the "port of entry"-jobs available to young skilled workers increasingly fail to match their skills and qualifications produced by the dual system.
- A separation between "fully qualified work" and marginal areas is appearing;
  modern labor market theory named this phenomenon the selection of staff into a coreworker group and marginal personnel.
- The point in time between finishing occupational training and taking on a job is increasingly decisive in determining whether the choice of an occupation was really successful or not.
- We also know from group discussions with our panel participants that the question "Take-on-offer or not?" has strong effects on the trainees in their consequent motivations and training success.
- The integration of those trained into the job system is

aggravated by the considerable discrepancies between training and occupational structure, which have diverged markedly during the years of so-called "training in reserve".

- o It is doubted that the training capacity built up by the dual system in trades and manufacturing is flexible enough to meet the needs of a service and information society.

You could ask what our survey results mean too the concept of vocational training.
My answer - a typical German response -is:

We should maintain the existing pattern of vocational training on the arguments that

1) there is a reasonable chance that job opportunities will occur as growth resumes;

2) even if the relevant job opportunities do not occur, the person can transfer what he or she has learned;

3) education/training will in any case give the person a sense of identity and a positive self-concept;

4) all our BIBB-Surveys give evidence that there is a considerable potential for elasticity of substitution among young trained manpower.

But I also believe that it will be necessary for the future

- o to strengthen the technological and scientific basis of most training occupations;

- o to prepare for both employment and unemployment.

That means new elements will have to be integrated into the curriculum around concepts of "key qualifications", "transferable core skills", "coping skills", providing vocational mobilitiy and the willingness to learn.
These are the essentials of occupational basic training, which can be adapted continually to changes in job structure, technological innovations and innovations in work organization.

What is needed is that a balance is found between more "general" objectives such as: being capable of mobility, autonomy, critical analysis and system thinking, the ability to work in a team and the occupation-specific knowledge and skills, for example in welding, electronics, pneumatics, hydraulics and information processing.

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THE FEDERAL INSTITUTE FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING

THE TRANSITION OF YOUNG PEOPLE INTO EMPLOYMENT

AFTER COMPLETION OF APPRENTICESHIP IN THE "DUAL SYSTEM"
(IN-PLANT-TRAINING AND PART-TIME SCHOOL)
("EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL CAREER")

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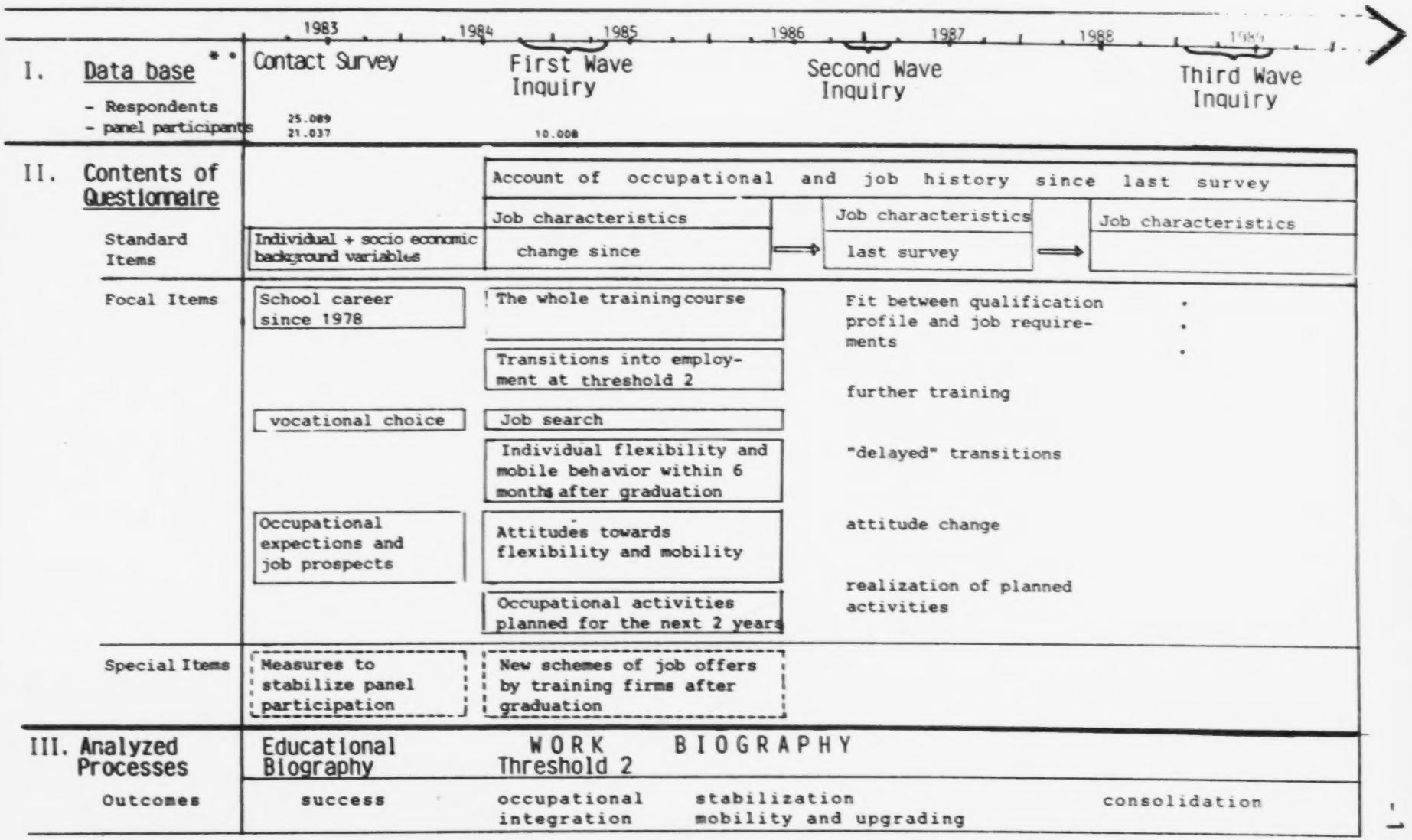
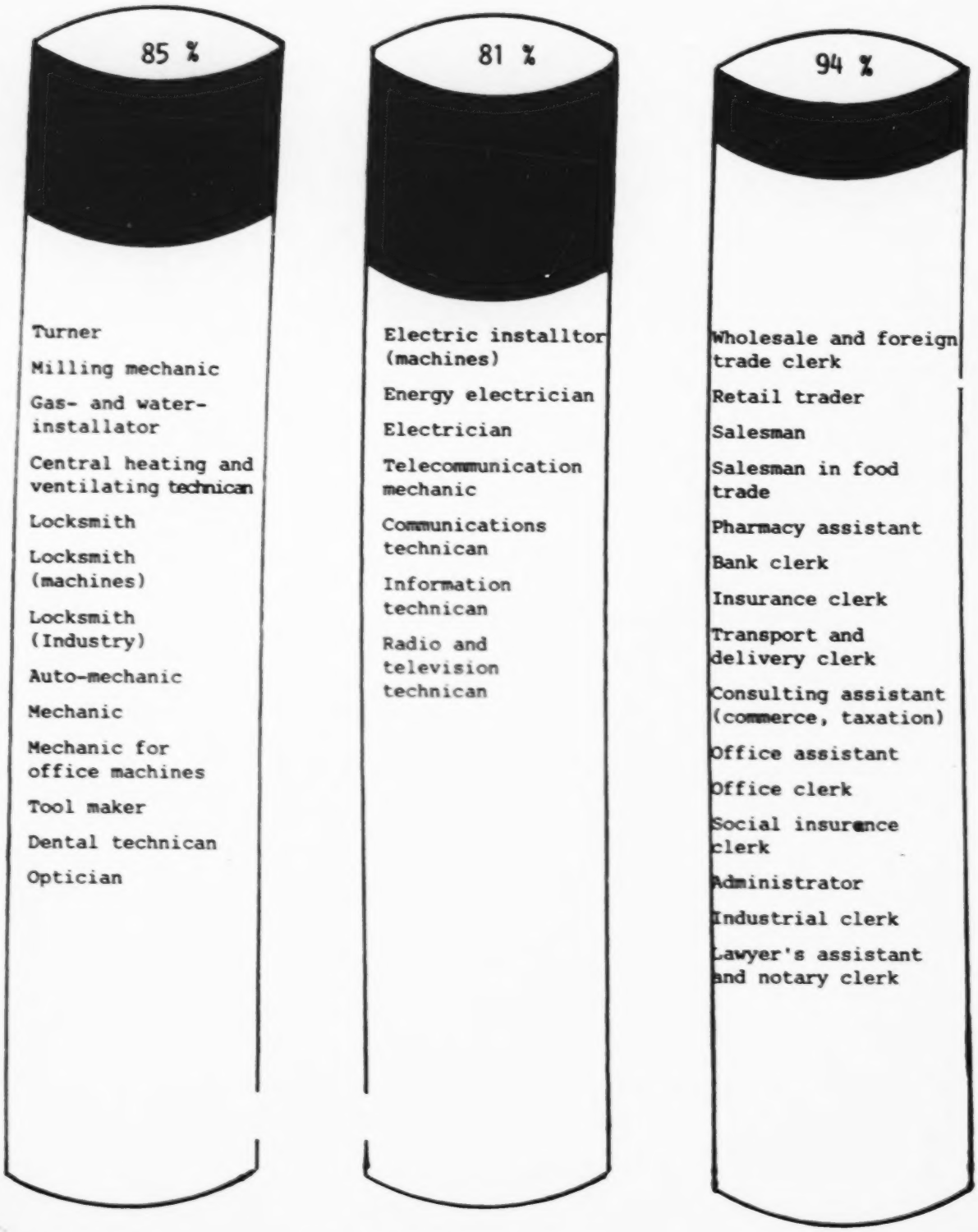
Young People Completing In-Plant Training in 1984:
A Follow-Up Survey of their Educational Career and Transition into Employment



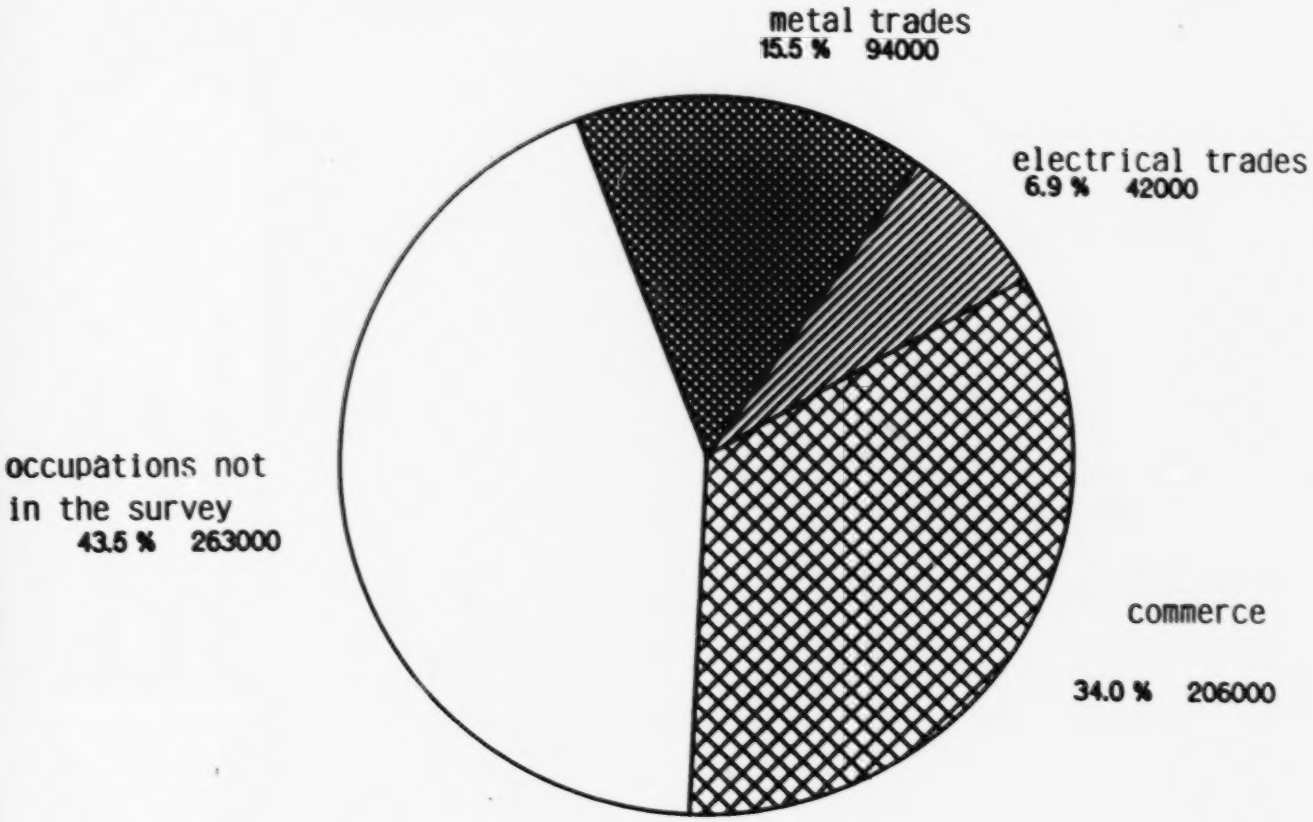
* Methods: (1) Standardized mail questionnaire (2) Group discussions and in-depth interviews

Selected occupations in the follow-up study and their representation of successful training graduates of three occupational fields in 1984 (in %)



Source: Statistical Office, own calculations

Successful training graduates 1984 as a total (100 % = 605.000) and in the selected occupations in three (out of 13) occupational fields



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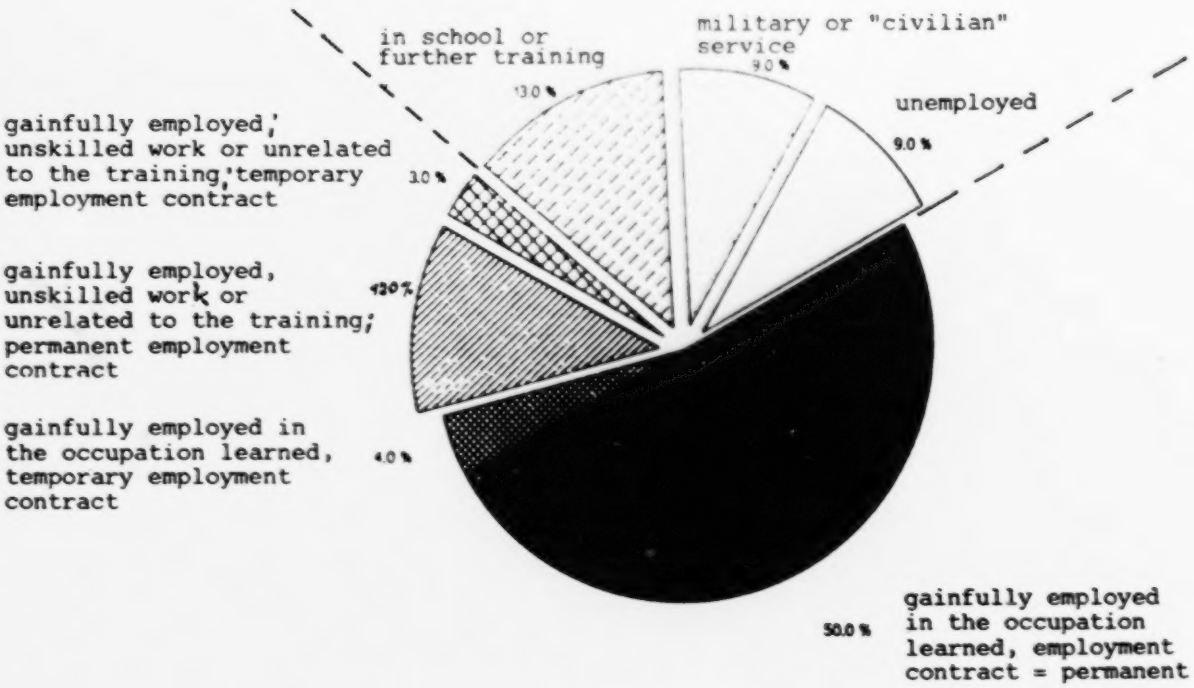
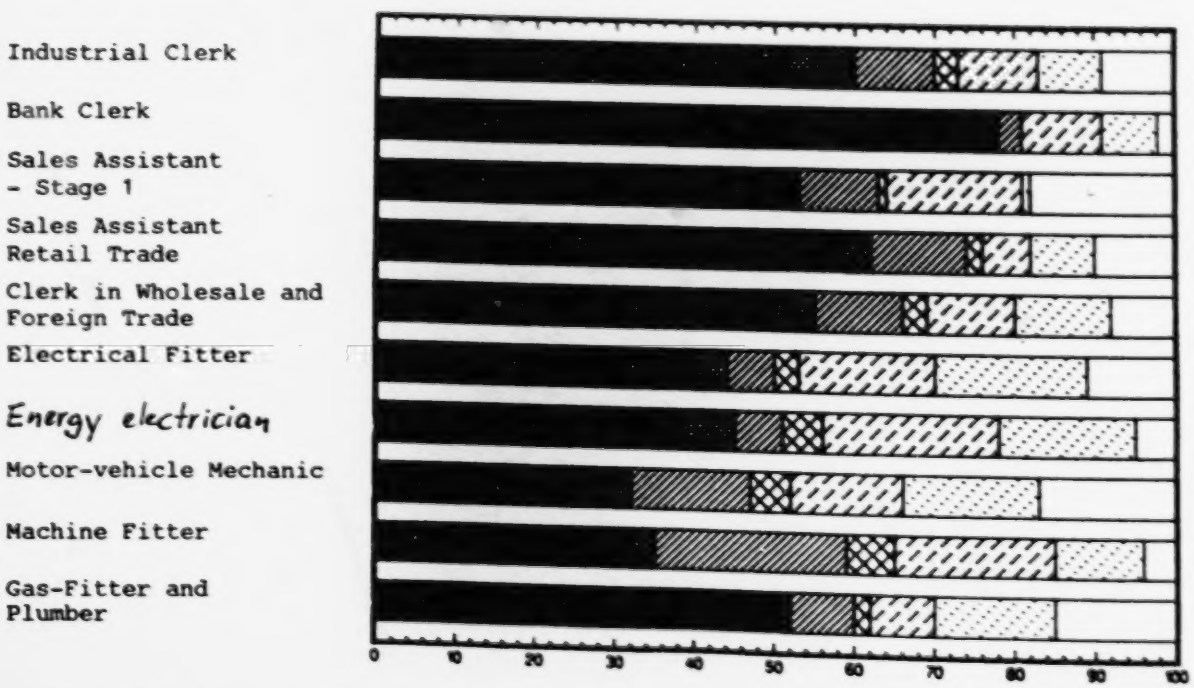
Source: Statistical Office

Status of young training graduates 6 months after examination


in school or further training
13.0 %
military or "civilian" service
9.0 %
unemployed
9.0 %
gainfully employed, unskilled work or unrelated to the training, temporary employment contract
3.0 %
gainfully employed, unskilled work or unrelated to the training; permanent employment contract
13.0 %
gainfully employed in the occupation learned, temporary employment contract
4.0 %
gainfully employed in the occupation learned, employment contract = permanent
50.0 %

Source: BIBB, Educational and occupational career (1. inquiry)

Legend same as above



Source: same as above

Difficulties of transition from training to employment

NEW TYPES* OF JOB OFFERS

(1) Temporary employment contract (deadline 1 year); type of job is equivalent to the occupation learned

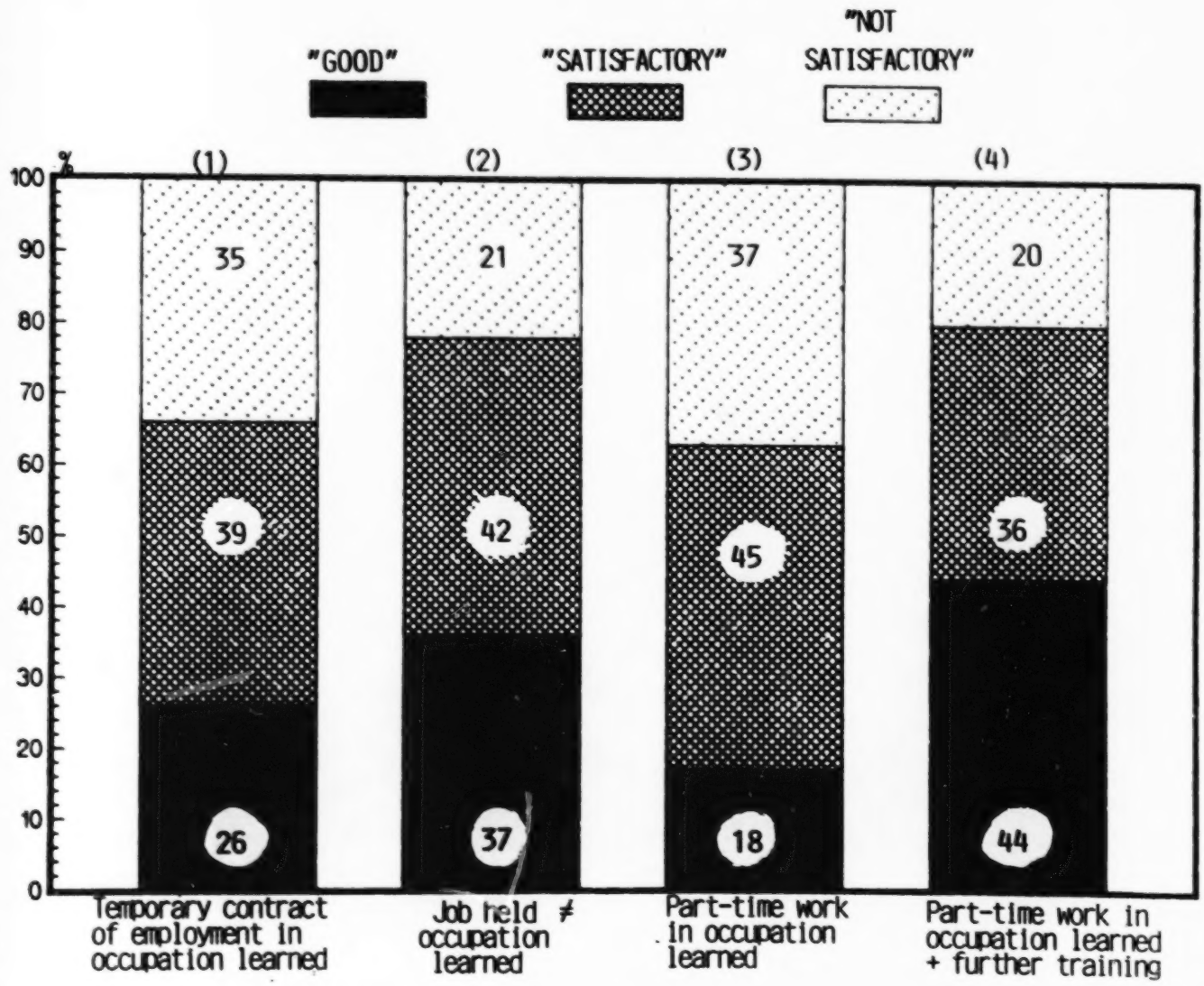
(2) Regular full-time employment contract (permanent); type of job is only partly related to the training occupation; part is unskilled work

(3) Regular part-time employment contract (24 - 32 hours per week); type of job is equivalent to the occupation learned

(4) Regular part-time work (20 - 24 hours per week) in combination with further training; type of job is equivalent to the occupation learned

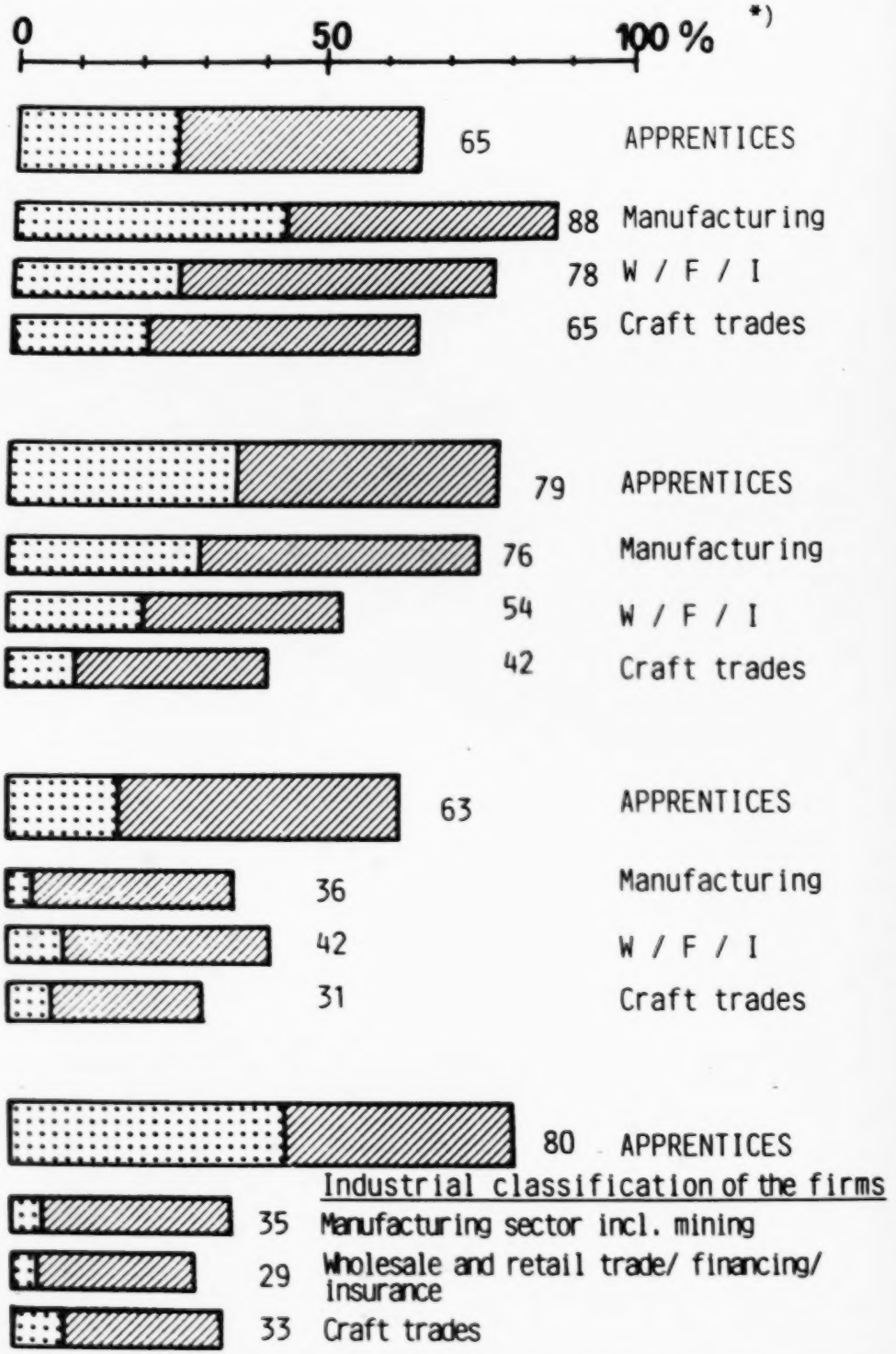
* In the survey the variety of possible types had to be reduced to four models (because of theoretical and methodological reasons)

NEWLY GRATUATED APPRENTICES (1984) EVALUATE NEW JOB- TYPES OFFERED BY EMPLOYERS



Source: BIBB, Educational and occupational career (1. inquiry)

Newly Graduated Apprentices and 7800 Firms Evaluate New Types of Jobs offered by Employers



*) The third rating category (Apprentices = "not satisfactory", Firms = "reject") adds to 100 Percent

Occupational Flexibility and Regional Mobility of Graduated Apprentices

Question:
"What would you do to get a job appropriate to your training occupation?"

(1) try to improve my job prospects by further training

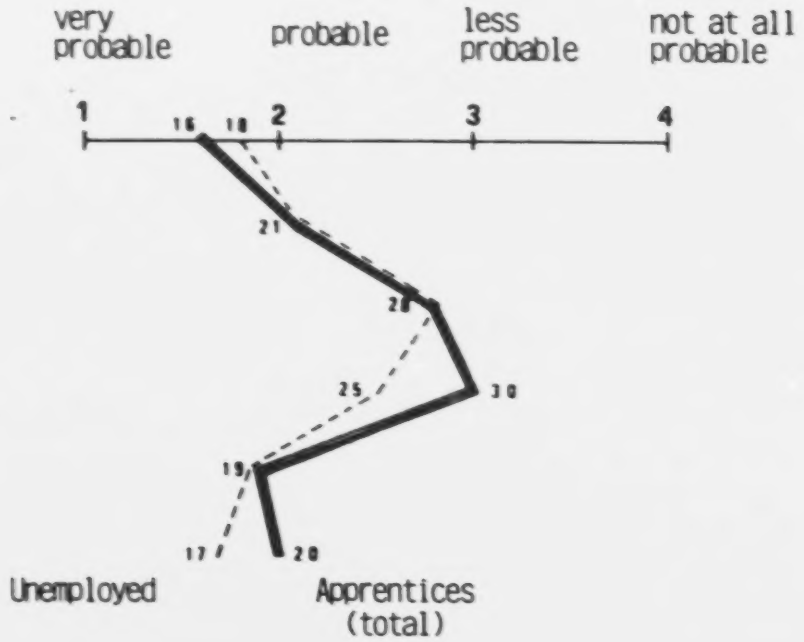
(2) be regionally mobile to a certain extent

(3) accept complete regional mobility

(4) would risk unemployment (for one year)

(5) would choose alternatives at the same financial and occupational/skill level

(6) If I can realize my financial expectations I'll take a (every) job not appropriate to my training occupation



Figures = arithmetic mean of the scale

Source: BIBB, Educational and occupational career (1. Inquiry)

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